The DMA Nonprofit Federation
GUIDE TO GOOD GIVING

1. How will my donation be used?
   Ask "How will my donation be used?" Organizations should provide detailed information and contacts.
   Be wary if you cannot easily find contact information to get questions answered.

2. Finding financial information.
   Organizations should provide annual reports or IRS Form 990 (find Form 990 at www.guidestar.org). Ask new or religious organizations what they have available.
   Legitimate organizations want to be open about finances and results because they know they will receive additional support as a trusted organization.

3. Sending funds.
   Legitimate organizations will always take a check or credit card.
   Be cautious when donating cash to unfamiliar organizations.

4. Protection of data.
   The organization should have a clear privacy policy for personal information it collects. Ask for it if you are donating via mail.
   Sensitive personal information, such as your social security number, your mother’s maiden name, and PIN access, are not sought by legitimate organizations.

5. No pressure!
   Legitimate organizations are professional and courteous when asking for your support.
   Be cautious of high-pressure tactics.

6. Phone contact.
   If contacted by phone, ask about the caller’s relationship to the organization. Legitimate organizations may work with professional fundraisers, volunteers, and staff. Always expect callers to explain who they are and why they called.
   Ask for callback information and an address if you are concerned.

7. Email spoofing.
   Be careful of online "spoofing" — emails that appear to be legitimate. They may have the right logo and "sent from" source. The site link may look like the real source.
   To avoid this, go to the organization’s website directly. If you are unsure of the web address, go to your search engine and enter the organization’s name.

8. Secure online donations.
   When donating online, make sure that you enter your personal information only on a site that is secured.
   Secured sites will have the "lock" icon in your browser.

   Forty-three states require charities to register with the attorney general or secretary of state. These offices can tell you if an organization is registered. Please report fraud immediately.
   Information can be found at www.nasconet.org. If your state is not listed, call your attorney general’s consumer assistance line.

10. Giving feels good!
    If you are truly concerned, donate to an organization that you know and trust.
    Giving with your heart should be tempered with your good judgment.

Tis the season for giving. With this guide to wiser giving, now you can be confident you’re giving with an open heart — and open eyes.